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Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Bangladesh, Guatemala, Mongolia and Sri Lanka: draft resolution

Cooperatives in social development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 47/90 of 16 December 1992, 49/155 of 23 December 1994, 51/58 of 12 December 1996, 54/123 of 17 December 1999, 56/114 of 19 December 2001, 58/131 of 22 December 2003, 60/132 of 16 December 2005, 62/128 of 18 December 2007, 64/136 of 18 December 2009 and 65/184 of 21 December 2010 concerning cooperatives in social development,

Recognizing that cooperatives, in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of all people, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, are becoming a major factor of economic and social development and contribute to the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing also the important contribution and potential of all forms of cooperatives to the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), including their five-year reviews, the World Food Summit, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the 2005 World Summit,

Noting with appreciation the potential role of cooperative development in the improvement of the social and economic conditions of indigenous peoples and rural communities,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[1]

[1] A/66/136.

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2. *Welcomes* the proclamation of the year 2012 as the International Year of Cooperatives and the launch of the Year on 31 October 2011;

3. *Encourages* all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to take advantage of the International Year of Cooperatives as a way of promoting cooperatives and raising awareness of their contribution to social and economic development and to share good practices on the implementation of the activities carried out during the Year;

4. *Invites* Governments to consider developing a road map or plan of action for the promotion of cooperatives for sustainable socio-economic development beyond the International Year of Cooperatives and to submit it to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session so as to ensure focused and effective follow-up to the activities of the Year;

5. *Draws the attention* of Governments to the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General to focus support on cooperatives as sustainable and successful business enterprises that contribute directly to employment generation, poverty reduction and social protection, across a variety of economic sectors in urban and rural areas;

6. *Encourages* Governments to keep under review, as appropriate, the legal and administrative provisions governing the activities of cooperatives in order to enhance the growth and sustainability of cooperatives in a rapidly changing socio-economic environment by, inter alia, providing a level playing field for cooperatives vis-à-vis other business and social enterprises, including appropriate tax incentives and access to financial services and markets;

7. *Urges* Governments, relevant international organizations and the specialized agencies, in collaboration with national and international cooperative organizations, to give due consideration to the role and contribution of cooperatives in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), including their five-year reviews, the World Food Summit, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the 2005 World Summit by, inter alia:

(a) Utilizing and developing fully the potential and contribution of cooperatives for the attainment of social development goals, in particular the eradication of poverty, the generation of full and productive employment and the enhancement of social integration;

(b) Encouraging and facilitating the establishment and development of cooperatives, including taking measures aimed at enabling people living in poverty or belonging to vulnerable groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, older persons and indigenous peoples, to fully participate, on a voluntary basis, in cooperatives and to address their social service needs;

(c) Taking appropriate measures aimed at creating a supportive and enabling environment for the development of cooperatives by, inter alia, developing an effective partnership between Governments and the cooperative movement through joint consultative councils and/or advisory bodies and by promoting and implementing better legislation, research, sharing of good practices, training,

technical assistance and capacity-building of cooperatives, especially in the fields of management, auditing and marketing skills;

(d) Raising public awareness of the contribution of cooperatives to employment generation and to socio-economic development, promoting comprehensive research and statistical data-gathering on the activities, employment and overall socio-economic impact of cooperatives at the national and international levels and promoting sound national policy formulation by harmonizing statistical methodologies;

8. *Invites* Governments, in collaboration with the cooperative movement, to develop programmes aimed at enhancing capacity-building of cooperatives, including by strengthening the organizational, management and financial skills of their members, and to introduce and support programmes to improve the access of cooperatives to new technologies;

9. *Invites* Governments and international organizations, in collaboration with cooperatives and cooperative organizations, to promote, as appropriate, the growth of agricultural cooperatives through easy access to affordable finance, adoption of sustainable production techniques, investments in rural infrastructure and irrigation, strengthened marketing mechanisms and support for the participation of women in economic activities;

10. *Also invites* Governments and international organizations, in collaboration with cooperatives and cooperative organizations, to promote, as appropriate, the growth of financial cooperatives to meet the goal of inclusive finance by providing easy access to affordable financial services for all;

11. *Encourages* Governments to intensify and expand the availability and accessibility of research on the operations and contribution of cooperatives and to establish methodologies for the collection and dissemination of comparable global data on and the good practices of cooperative enterprises, in collaboration with all stakeholders;

12. *Invites* Governments, relevant international organizations, the specialized agencies and local, national and international cooperative organizations to continue to observe the International Day of Cooperatives annually, on the first Saturday of July, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/90;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations and other international organizations and national, regional and international cooperative organizations, to continue rendering support to Member States, as appropriate, in their efforts to create a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives, providing assistance for human resources development, technical advice and training and promoting an exchange of experience and best practices through, inter alia, conferences, workshops and seminars at the national and regional levels;

14. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including an overview of the activities that have been implemented during the International Year of Cooperatives.